

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 19, 2021

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

As the House Committee on Agriculture continues to monitor the implementation of the American Rescue Plan, I remain interested in learning more about a number of references the Department has made to addressing gaps and disparities in the level of assistance that producers received in previous rounds of COVID relief. For example, in an overview of the American Rescue Plan Debt Payments on your website, the reference to *"gaps and disparities in the level of assistance"* simply leads to the department's March 24, 2021 press release, which offers no additional information.

As Congress contemplates additional rounds of assistance, it is vital that we learn lessons from Congress' previous efforts. Since April 14—35 days ago—my team has reached out to the Department on five separate occasions to discuss the issue; however, to date, no response has been received. There has not even been an acknowledgement of the request.

I share your concern and interest in making certain that COVID-19 relief is being distributed in an equitable manner. But, for that goal to be achieved, it is imperative that USDA provide details to support the gaps and disparities you have identified.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Thompson". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Glenn" written in a cursive script and the last name "Thompson" in a more formal, slightly cursive script.

Glenn 'GT' Thompson  
Republican Leader  
House Committee on Agriculture